

AMENDED IN SENATE MAY 12, 2014

AMENDED IN SENATE APRIL 29, 2014

SENATE BILL

No. 1175

Introduced by Senator Walters

February 20, 2014

An act to amend Section 35401.5 of the Vehicle Code, relating to vehicles.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

SB 1175, as amended, Walters. Vehicles: length limitations: motorsports.

Existing law generally prohibits a vehicle from exceeding a length of 40 feet, and a combination of vehicles from exceeding a total length of 65 feet, with various specific exceptions. Existing law, until January 1, 2016, exempts from these provisions a combination of vehicles consisting of a truck tractor semitrailer combination with a kingpin to rearmost axle measurement limit of not more than 46 feet, a trailer length of not more than 56 feet, and used exclusively or primarily in connection with motorsports, as defined.

This bill would extend the operation of that exemption to January 1, 2018. *The bill would require the Department of Transportation to conduct field tests of the truck tractor semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet to evaluate their performance on all segments of interstate highways and transition routes connecting to sanctioned motorsport racecourses, except for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway. The bill would require, on or before January 1, 2018, the department to make the needed roadway improvements identified in the field tests and for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway to accommodate the truck tractor*

semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet. The bill would require the department to update the transition routes to reflect road projects completed since the 1990s and to update the transition routes every 5 years thereafter. The bill would require the department to develop new transition routes for the truck tractor semitrailer combination for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet. The bill would require, no later than January 1, 2017, the department to submit a report to the Legislature that includes the results of the field tests, an overview of the related roadway improvements identified and made, and, in consultation with the Department of the California Highway Patrol, a recommendation as to whether the 56 foot trailer length should be reauthorized. The bill would also make technical, nonsubstantive changes to these provisions.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: ~~no~~-yes.
State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 35401.5 of the Vehicle Code is amended
2 to read:
3 35401.5. (a) A combination of vehicles consisting of a truck
4 tractor and semitrailer, or of a truck tractor, semitrailer, and trailer,
5 is not subject to the limitations of Sections 35400 and 35401, when
6 operating on the Dwight D. Eisenhower National System of
7 Interstate and Defense Highways or when using those portions of
8 federal-aid primary system highways that have been qualified by
9 the United States Secretary of Transportation for that use, or when
10 using routes appropriately identified by the Department of
11 Transportation or local authorities as provided in subdivision (c)
12 or (d), if all of the following conditions are met:
13 (1) The length of the semitrailer in exclusive combination with
14 a truck tractor does not exceed 48 feet. A semitrailer not more than
15 53 feet in length shall satisfy this requirement when configured
16 with two or more rear axles, the rearmost of which is located 40
17 feet or less from the kingpin or when configured with a single axle
18 which is located 38 feet or less from the kingpin. For purposes of
19 this paragraph, a motortruck used in combination with a semitrailer,
20 when that combination of vehicles is engaged solely in the
21 transportation of motor vehicles, camper units, or boats, is
22 considered to be a truck tractor.

1 (2) Neither the length of the semitrailer nor the length of the
2 trailer when simultaneously in combination with a truck tractor
3 exceeds 28 feet 6 inches.

4 (b) Subdivisions (b), (d), and (e) of Section 35402 do not apply
5 to combinations of vehicles operated subject to the exemptions
6 provided by this section.

7 (c) Combinations of vehicles operated pursuant to subdivision
8 (a) may also use highways not specified in subdivision (a) that
9 provide reasonable access to terminals and facilities for purposes
10 limited to fuel, food, lodging, and repair when that access is
11 consistent with the safe operation of the combinations of vehicles
12 and when the facility is within one road mile of identified points
13 of ingress and egress to or from highways specified in subdivision
14 (a) for use by those combinations of vehicles.

15 (d) The Department of Transportation or local authorities may
16 establish a process whereby access to terminals or services may
17 be applied for upon a route not previously established as an access
18 route. The denial of a request for access to terminals and services
19 shall be only on the basis of safety and an engineering analysis of
20 the proposed access route. If a written request for access has been
21 properly submitted and has not been acted upon within 90 days of
22 receipt by the department or the appropriate local agency, the
23 access shall be deemed automatically approved. Thereafter, the
24 route shall be deemed open for access by all other vehicles of the
25 same type regardless of ownership. In lieu of processing an access
26 application, the Department of Transportation or local authorities
27 with respect to highways under their respective jurisdictions may
28 provide signing, mapping, or a listing of highways as necessary
29 to indicate the use of specific routes as terminal access routes. For
30 purposes of this subdivision, “terminal” means either of the
31 following:

32 (1) A facility where freight originates, terminates, or is handled
33 in the transportation process.

34 (2) A facility where a motor carrier maintains operating
35 facilities.

36 (e) Nothing in subdivision (c) or (d) authorizes state or local
37 agencies to require permits of terminal operators or to charge
38 terminal operators fees for the purpose of attaining access for
39 vehicles described in this section.

(f) Notwithstanding subdivision (d), the limitations of access specified in that subdivision do not apply to licensed carriers of household goods when directly en route to or from a point of loading or unloading of household goods, if travel on highways other than those specified in subdivision (a) is necessary and incidental to the shipment of the household goods.

(g) (1) Notwithstanding Sections 35400 and 35401, a combination of vehicles consisting *solely* of a truck tractor semitrailer combination with a kingpin to rearmost axle measurement limit of not more than 46 feet, a trailer length of not more than 56 feet, and used exclusively or primarily in connection with motorsports, may operate on the routes identified in subdivision (a) as well as on any other routes authorized for that purpose by the Department of Transportation in consultation with the Department of the California Highway Patrol. As used in this subdivision, “motorsports” means an event, and all activities leading up to that event, including, but not limited to, administration, testing, practice, promotion, and merchandising, that is sanctioned under the auspices of the member organizations of the Automobile Competition Committee for the United States.

(2) (A) *The Department of Transportation shall conduct field tests of the truck tractor semitrailer combination authorized under paragraph (1) for motorsport trucks with a trailer length of 56 feet to evaluate their performance on all segments of the National Network and transition routes connecting to sanctioned motorsport racecourses, except for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway.*

(B) *On or before January 1, 2018, the Department of Transportation shall make the needed roadway improvements identified in the field tests and for the Pomona Raceway and the Sonoma Raceway, to accommodate the truck tractor semitrailer combination authorized under paragraph (1).*

(C) (i) *The Legislature finds and declares that the Department of Transportation established the existing transition routes described in subparagraph (A) based on records from the 1990s.*

(ii) *The Department of Transportation shall update the transition routes to reflect road projects completed since the 1990s and shall update the transition routes every five years thereafter.*

(iii) *The Department of Transportation shall develop new transition routes for the truck tractor semitrailer combination*

1 *authorized under paragraph (1) for motorsport trucks with a trailer*
2 *length of 56 feet.*

3 *(D) The Department of Transportation shall, no later than*
4 *January 1, 2017, submit a report to the Legislature, in compliance*
5 *with Section 9795 of the Government Code, that includes the results*
6 *of the field tests, an overview of the related roadway improvements*
7 *identified and made, and, in consultation with the Department of*
8 *the California Highway Patrol, a recommendation as to whether*
9 *the 56 foot trailer length should be reauthorized.*

10 *(E) Notwithstanding Section 10231.5 of the Government Code,*
11 *the requirement for submitting a report under this paragraph is*
12 *inoperative on January 1, 2019.*

13 ~~(2)~~

14 *(3) The authority conferred by this subdivision remains operative*
15 *only until January 1, 2018.*

16 *(h) The Legislature finds and declares both of the following:*

17 *(1) In authorizing the use of 53-foot semitrailers, it is the intent*
18 *of the Legislature to conform with Section 31111(b)(1)(C) of Title*
19 *49 of the United States Code by permitting the continued use of*
20 *semitrailers of the dimensions as those that were in actual and legal*
21 *use on December 1, 1982, and does not intend this action to be a*
22 *precedent for future increases in the parameters of any of those*
23 *vehicles that would adversely affect the turning maneuverability*
24 *of vehicle combinations.*

25 *(2) In authorizing the department to issue special transportation*
26 *permits for motorsports, it is the intent of the Legislature to*
27 *conform with Section 31111(b)(1)(F) of Title 49 of the United*
28 *States Code. It is also the intent of the Legislature that this action*
29 *not be a precedent for future increases in the distance from the*
30 *kingpin to the rearmost axle of semitrailers and trailers that would*
31 *adversely affect the turning maneuverability of vehicle*
32 *combinations.*